Whaley, Storm 1995

Mr. Storm Whaley Oral History 1995

Download the PDF: Whaley_Storm_Oral_History_1995 (PDF 334 kB)

This is an interview of Mr. Storm Whaley, former Associate Director for Communications at the National Institutes of Health, taken on September 25, 1995. The interviewers are Dr. Victoria Harden and Judy Folkenberg. The interview was conducted at NIH, in Building 31.

Harden: I'm going to start, Mr. Whaley, by thanking you for being with us today, and asking you if you could summarize, briefly but fairly thoroughly, your career before you arrived at NIH?

Whaley: Well, I'm glad to be here, and you may not be glad to get the full dose of my rather checkered career, which it is. I was in radio for about 18 years, right after getting out of college, and in different positions, but essentially in management. But I was on the air a great deal. After all, it was a regional station. But we did everything. We wrote copy, we sold advertising, and then managed.

Harden: The name of the station?

Whaley: Pardon?

Harden: The name of the station?

Whaley: KUOA. It originally was owned by the University of Arkansas that later sold it to the Fulbright family, Bill Fulbright. The Senator's mother was a publisher and they bought the radio station to protect their newspaper really. And then the people I was with, the Brown Organization, bought the station from them, and I became a part of the sort of original prize crew that took over the vessel after we took it. So I was in that for quite a long period of time and, in the process of that, I was involved in a lot of community service. During the war I was, for instance, the County Chairman of the War Bonds, and County Chairman of Red Cross, the money-raising campaigns, and this led, sort of naturally, into politics and I became rather active in the Democratic Party and went to the National Conventions of '40 and '44, 48, and '52.

Harden: As a Delegate?

Whaley: As a Delegate. And one thing sort of led to another in that, and I was finally the County Democratic Committee Chairman.And then, in 1952, because the organization I was in… I should back up to say that the Brown Organization bought a radio station in Long Beach, California, a 5-kilowatt station, and one in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Our base was in Arkansas, at Siloam Springs, which was where the KUOA, the original station, was. But I realized in '53 that this was really a family organization and that the time had come for me to do something else. And I wasn't the family. They'd been very good to me and I had no complaints about it, but I felt that really I should move off in another direction, and I think perhaps politics was in my mind. I went to work for the Congressman from that district as his A.A., Congressman James Trimble. And I came to Washington and was here for 6 months and in the district for 6 months, because that was the way, at that time--this was in the early '50s--the Congressmen spent more time at home than they do now. And I enjoyed this very much. It was really a great experience. On the other hand, it's not a good family situation because you have to spend 6 months one place or the other, and it would not have been economically feasible to bring the family to Washington. So, about the same time I took the job with the Congressman, the University of Arkansas offered me a position as Assistant to the President with responsibility in the legislative area. And I told them, "Well, I'm just about to go to work for the Congressman." And they said, "Well, we think that would be excellent training." And so they held the job for me and then I went back to the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville in '54 and was really the "Chief Lobbyist," I guess you would say, working with the State Legislature and, in addition, had responsibility generally for their Information Programs as the Public Information Officer and spokesperson for the University. This led through a series of--I feel a little foolish about telling this story, but I'm going to anyway--a series of "misadventures," I guess you would say. If you recall, Arkansas history in that period was troubled. This was the Central High School period, and the University was feeling the full impact of that. We had a large establishment in Little Rock, and a lot of our faculty members had children in Central High. And if you recall, it was closed, I believe, in either '58 or '59, so there was a lot of concern in the University--and unrest--and, of course, a great deal of feeling against the Governor, although, in a state like Arkansas, the Governor is a very important person as far as the University is concerned. He appoints the Trustees. So, I was in sort of the middle of this. At about that time, the President of the University, John Caldwell, was offered the job of Chancellor of North Carolina State in Raleigh and, unbeknownst to him, his Deputy, Lewis Roybal, was offered the Chancellorship of the Medical Center of Boston University, and they each accepted, neither knowing the other had done it. And in mid-summer of '59, we discovered the two top officers of the University were leaving. Well, because I had been extremely active in the legislative scene during that particular year, a bitter year, the Board decided, well, to sort of hold things together, they would ask me to be the Acting President, and assigned me to, one, help them find a new President and, two, straighten out the Medical Center. The Medical Center was our biggest problem at that point because it was located in Little Rock which was 200 miles from the Main Campus, was crosswise with the medical profession in the state and with the Legislature and was really in trouble. It nearly lost its appropriation, which was scary.

So, with these two jobs, I did better in helping them find a President than I did the Medical Center problem.

Harden: May I ask one thing?

Whaley: Uh-huh.

Harden: Why were they-- What were the issues that they were at odds with?

Whaley: The Board felt that the Medical Center needed to get closer to the medical profession in the state, I think, was one of the big issues because, in a state like Arkansas, the State Medical Society has tremendous influence on the Legislature, and the Medical Center Faculty, as such, doesn't have that kind of standing in the legislative setting; I mean, just looking at it as a legislative problem.

So that was one of the issues. The other was there was a strong feeling in the Board that the man who was Dean, that they thought a great deal of, should separate himself and should take either the Deanship or the Vice Chancellorship, that is the head over the Medical Center itself, because it had a hospital, a School of Nursing, a School of Pharmacy, and Allied Health, as well as the School of Medicine. The feeling within the faculty, I think--and certainly there was some--that he should take one job or the other, and it was a very difficult choice for him to make because he liked being a dean. You could understand why he wouldn't want to break his tie with the medical school. And, on the other hand, he recognized that he didn't much like having someone put in over him.

Well, as I worked on the recruitment, I had two people in mind, one of whom you may know, was Bothel A. Jones. I had been told that he might be available at Emory University. He was a lawyer. He had the job of head of a medical center. He was not a doctor. But I'd been told by a person who knew him that he might be willing to change locations. I think his wife had just died perhaps, and I think he was in an unsettled situation. But, in any case, I did go to see him and talked with him quite a bit about the problem of a layman operating a medical center as the Chief Operating Officer, and he felt it was feasible and certainly was an example himself of how it could be done, and done well. And so he turned me down.

I went then to a man who I thought would be an excellent choice, and I still think was a good choice, but who didn't take it either. He was one of the top officers--and I've forgotten what position--with the American Medical Association, but had, before going to the AMA, been the Chief of the Agricultural Extension Service in Arkansas for the University and knew the state extremely well and had the rural feel that was necessary, I felt. And here again was the idea of a non-physician being a non-threatening person to the physicians who were in the Medical School. That was our thinking, that by putting a person here who could not exercise medical judgement, you would have perhaps a situation that might help the whole thing really get straightened out with the Legislature.

Well, having failed on these two passes, and having identified a President, the Board says, "We're going to give you that job." And so, for 10 years I was in this position at the Arkansas Medical Center. This was a long explanation of why I became involved with NIH.

In the course of that I came to know the man who was the Vice Chancellor for Medical Affairs at the University of Mississippi in Jackson, who was Robert Marston, and he, about the time I began to get to know him pretty well--and we had some problems where he was very helpful with me, in advising me on how to deal with them--he was tapped to be the Head of the new Regional Medical Programs, which was a big item in the Johnson Administration and was strongly backed by DeBakey and a lot of the leaders of that period.

And so he came to Washington in the Regional Medical Programs in, I think this would have been, about '65 and, after he was here, he asked me would I join him. Well, at that time we were having some real problems of our own and I didn't feel that I could, although I did spend a good deal of time as a non-Federal consultant to the RMP.

Harden: And you were also on the National Advisory Health Council, weren't you?

Whaley: Yes. That's right. I'd forgotten that. Yes, I was appointed to the National Advisory Health Council somewhere in there, in '63 or '64, and was named to go with the World Health Assembly group that went over three years, I guess.

And so it was in that period that I was up here quite a bit and enjoyed working with the RMP. And one of the things that I was able to do was help Marston fill a lot of speaking engagements, because he had many more than he could fill. He was asked to go all over the country and explain what this new concept was. It was a brand new idea. And so I had my little set speech and I was dispatched to places where he couldn't go. And so I did a good deal of that in that period. And so I was in and out with the RMP and this went on, I guess, through '66 or '67, maybe into '68.

Then some of the administrative difficulties, and other things, at the Medical Center really demanded full-time, and we were able finally to get them straightened out. Well then--and this would have been about 1970--and I had a call from the old Health Service's Mental Health Administration, HSMHA it was called, that the man who was their legislative liaison, named Bennett, was going to take a job somewhere else and that they thought I might be a good replacement for him.

Well, I felt that maybe it was a good time, so I came up and was interviewed at length and met the people in the administration of HSMHA and it seemed like things were going pretty well. And so they decided it would be well, however, for me to meet the Assistant Secretary for Legislation because this was the kind of job that was politicized, it had a lot of political aspects to it, so I did have lunch with Creed Black, was his name, who was, of course, a Nixon appointee. And this was the Republican Administration by this time. And somewhere in the course of it, it occurred to me I'd better warn them that I had a Democratic history. And so I did. The way I put it was that I saw Creed Black turn white, which is essentially what happened to him, because obviously I wasn't fit for that position in the climate of the time. I can understand now. I didn't fully understand then because I hadn't understood exactly what the job was.

Well, a long silence ensued and nothing followed. Then, in the meantime, they had gotten a little ahead of themselves and had cleared with the Hill my appointment, which they do with an appointment of this sort. In other words, they had talked with people like-- And at that time the delegation from Arkansas was a pretty strong one. They had John McClellan, Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, of the big committee, and, of course, Wilbur Mills of Ways and Means, and Orrin Harris, who was also an important one. So, they had sort of gotten the blessing on me for this job that they weren't going to appoint me to, and so the silence, as I say.

Finally, someone charitably told me that they had a problem; that they felt that they couldn't appoint me and they couldn't not appoint me, and they didn't quite know what to do. So, because I wasn't under pressure to leave, I was able to get unhooked from that.

Well, somehow I think that these initial contacts had made them think that they should do something nice for me, and so some weeks later I was called again and asked to come to look at a job at HSMHA that would have worked out politically and would have been okay. Well, somehow or other, they had put a clearance through for this new job, that is, again, the administrative level clearance, and the word came back but they called back to the wrong agency; they cleared me to Marston, who didn't even know I was looking at a job. And he called me immediately and said he wanted me here at NIH because he had a job that he felt that would be just right for somebody with my experience.

And so by mistake--really, that's what it was; they had given the word to the wrong person--Marston learned that I was in the market. And then that ties with the little bit of history that you probably want to talk about, is why were they looking for someone for this position at that particular time.

Folkenberg: Actually, you sort of answered my question, so why don't you just take the next one?

Harden: Okay. Well, that is our next question then. We were trying to find out how you got here, and I know there had been a number of studies and conversations about the whole idea of Government science, Government medicine, communicating with the public; the Woolbridge Committee Report, in '65, I think, and I don't know what else. Can you talk about these in the creation of your position?

Whaley: Yes. Well, I think perhaps the position was more related to the uneasiness, or the discomfort--I guess you would say--of the Appropriations Committees because so frequently they would say, you know, "You're not getting the word out. People don't know what NIH is. They've never heard of it. We want it to be as well known as the FBI," was the common thing. I think Mr. Flood was very active in saying this when he was Chairman of our Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee. And I think that Senator Hill probably-- This was a common strain that one heard in the Congress way back then.

And the NIH had been extremely conservative, I must say, about getting the word out, or about the posture of science. One of the things that I guess I can talk about now that surprised me to find it--and I may have told you this before--was really a very strong administrative reprimand, almost--not in the technical sense of the word--to one of our Information Officers who tied the winning of a Nobel Prize in any way to an NIH previous connection. This was from Dr. Shannon, who had a very strong feeling that one shouldn't do this; that it was hucksterism in a sense, and he essentially said so.

Well, you can see that that policy was a pretty conservative one and there was a strong feeling that it wasn't really proper for the NIH to advertise its wares. But the Congress, at the same time, was saying, "You've got to be better known or we can't support you. We've got to have a public--almost--mandate to give money of the kind we're giving to NIH."

So, I think it was this, as much as anything else, that led Dr. Marston to believe that he had to do something to calm the Congress down, to make them feel that we were giving more emphasis to this.

Now, this sort of coincided--and here my history gets a little fuzzy--but the person who had held the position of the principal information person--and that wasn't the title and, in fact, I've forgotten what it was--Cliff Johnson, Cliff had been the victim, really, of a bad situation that had occurred that was not his fault where some off-hand remarks got into one of our internal publications, as I recall, that set off someone's temper down at the Departmental level and really mandated that this man be moved. And here I'm talking internal affairs, but this is what happened.

And so Dr. Marston was faced with a troublesome situation. He had to fill this position and, furthermore, he felt he had to beef it up and give it more visibility, and so he created the post of Associate Director for Communication, which was new at that time. They simply didn't have such a position. It was Chief of the News Bureau, or some such, was the previous title.

Folkenberg: Did Dr. Marston have any specific requests for you, or did he give you pretty much a free rein in running the office? And did you report to him or to his Deputy Director for Science, Robert Berliner?

Whaley: No. I reported to him.

Folkenberg: To Marston?

Whaley: Yes.

Folkenberg: Okay.

Whaley: And his charge was general. It was the position description, and it would be useful, for historical purposes, if you could find that, of my original position description because it was very full, almost too full. It had a great deal in it. And that would be the charter for the job, and so I think it would be useful.

Harden: Can you follow up on that a little more in terms of what your hopes and goals were?

Whaley: Well, of course, I felt that I understood a bit from my previous contact with NIH as a granting agency and as important to us, and though we were not a big research institution we at least knew the importance of it and knew what an effect it had generally on education, medical education in particular, in the country.

My hope was that we could somehow tell this fascinating story of research in perhaps a different way and use different media than we had used. I'll have to say that I had not been in the information activity, as such, at this time for quite a long period of time, and so I was having to do some pretty fast catching up with what was going on. But I think, perhaps, it was a kind of amalgam of my experience in dealing with the legislative situation where we had to keep explaining what medical education and medical research was, and some understanding, at least, of what the national situation was with regard to regional medical programs because that, in itself, was really a device for getting the word out as to what medical research could do for you. Its purpose was to tie research with practice, and so it had a national goal. And so I guess my thinking was tying these all together.

Folkenberg: You sort of have touched on this, but what did you perceive as the biggest communication problem facing you when you took this job? And I guess you more or less answered that, but was there anything else you'd like to add to that?

Whaley: No. I think I was aware that we needed to get to the national media better than we were doing. There was a movie that had just been completed, and I guess under Cliff's aegis, which was a very good movie, the name of which I can't remember now, that was shown just about the time I came. As a matter of fact, one of my first duties was to organize a premier showing of this movie down on the Hill in the Senate for Senator Magnuson, who was a strong advocate. And, by the way, I should have mentioned that Senator Magnuson was one of those who put a great deal of pressure on Dr. Marston to improve the dissemination of information about NIH. This was showing up, by the way, in the report language of the appropriations and it got stronger as time went on.

Harden: What media did you try to access that hadn't normally been accessed?

Whaley: Well, I was thinking more of network television was one of the things that I felt we somehow needed to get into. I didn't quite know much about how to do it, but was concerned about it.

Harden: Anne mentioned to us, when we were preparing this, that she thought that one of the first things that you were faced with doing was writing, or ghost-writing, some sort of key speech on human subjects, rights of human subjects, and that you got very involved in this whole field. Can you talk about that?

Whaley: Yes. That was within the first year, I would say. I was involved in helping Dr. Marston with some speeches. He wrote a lot of his own, but also asked for help. But here was one that was considered to be an important speech that he felt might have some long-lasting influence, and this had to do with the research using human subjects. And is this what you were referring to?

Harden: Uh-huh.

Whaley: It was a speech scheduled for the University of Virginia at Charlottesville. And I've forgotten what the occasion was, whether it was some kind of an assembly, or a dedication of a library, or something of that sort. But the Tuskeegee Affair was beginning to be heard about at that time, and he felt that it was time for a strong statement to be made about the interest of NIH in the ethics of the use of human subjects and of our desire to do something about it.

Of course, this subject had been talked about in Dr. Shannon's day. Certainly it had been in the early '60s, or '64, or '65. Luther Terry had been interested in it was Surgeon General. And one of the things the National Advisory Health Council dealt with was some of the early concerns about the use of human subjects, and I believe Dr. Shannon took some of the lead in that. But Dr. Marston felt that the time was ripe to really say something about this in a strong way, and he did.

Harden: He said it in his way. Was there any debate before he decided to say it? I mean there were people in the Public Health Service still active, I believe, who had been directly involved in Tuskeegee and felt that there had been no ethical breach.

Whaley: I don't believe he attacked it. In fact, I'm sure he didn't. But, on the other hand, he wanted to express the idea that we were concerned about it and, if any doubt arises about this kind of thing, we should not let it go forward. I think his was a caution; I don't think his was a condemnation.

Harden: Setting a new initiative, as it were?

Whaley: That's right. But, one of the things he did do with this speech was, we farmed it out to everyone in the country, it seemed to me like. It was one of those sort of nightmare situations from a speechwriter's point of view where you'll do a draft and it would be sent off and we would start getting comments back. Instead of getting them in one day, you'd get them one day, the next day, the next day, the next day. You would rewrite on the basis of each new set of comments. So, we were still rewriting that speech when he took it to Charlottesville and we were still getting comments on it for another two or three weeks afterward. And, of course, the final version of the speech, it actually was one of those that was done sort of like they do in Congress, revised and extended, and it was really, I think, perhaps some time in completion after actually being delivered. But it became a kind of foundation piece.

Folkenberg: Were you surprised when Dr. Marston was fired, and what was the fallout at NIH over Marston's firing? Now, I should hasten to add this is how *Science* referred to him leaving here.

Whaley: Well, see, he was fired--I would agree--and we were shocked, I guess, is the quick answer to that, although it was not too surprising in a way because, if you were following things at that time, this was the beginning of the second Nixon Administration and he had, I believe, informed Dr. Marston that his appointment would not go past the new presidential term unless he were reappointed in a sense. So, his firing was in a sense a failure to reappoint is another way to look at it.

But things were highly political and Dr. Marston was-- Yes, now I remember it a little bit. We had just gone through the legislative struggle over separating the Cancer Institute from NIH, which Dr. Marston opposed, and opposed it without asking anybody's permission. He said it was a bad idea. And I happened to be with him when *The Post*--Vic Cohen I think it was--called him and said, "We hear that there is a move to separate the Cancer Institute from NIH," and Marston said, "I'm against it," and didn't ask any questions or equivocate.

What the problem was, the Administration hadn't made up its mind yet and, somewhere along the way, decided to go along with it after this had first been broached. You may recall, it was in the Senate and it was pushed very hard by Mary Lasker and a number of the Senators that she worked with, and it passed with only one dissenting vote in the Senate and was about to go to the House, and it could have passed very quickly and smoothly if something hadn't slowed it down.

And at first the White House opposed it, and then they decided to go with it, and it became a question of really their bidding, in a sense, against Senator Kennedy. There was really high stakes involved here. It first started out, I think, with the White House trying to outdo the Senator in asking for money for NCI. Then they took the move to separate it and the White House first opposed it, then came along with it, which left Marston really out in left field. It was a difficult situation to be in. Then, eventually, of course, it was slowed down and Congressman Rogers was, I think, largely responsible for getting people to back off and think about what they were doing. And the whole scientific community became concerned about this, about breaking up NIH, and so eventually, of course, it didn't happen. But the legislation that was passed created a kind of a new structure that created a special advisor to the Cancer Institute and we had the situation there for the Director of the Cancer Institute being appointed by the President, whereas the Director of NIH was appointed by the Secretary, which was the situation that existed for a little while until that was changed.

So, no, it was not a big surprise because it was apparent that there were points of difference.

Harden: Well, to take this further, Dr. Marston had to "suffer," as it were, as Dr. Shannon's successor also, and he and Stone both, I think, talked about sitting in Shannon's office. Can you talk about the whole mood of the campus receiving this new person and talk about Marston's style in general as the Director?

Whaley: Yes. Well, of course, it would have been very difficult for anyone to follow Dr. Shannon because he was recognized as the gray eminence, as the person who had really brought NIH into being essentially. It was quite small in the mid '50s, and it was under his influence and his vision, his drive, his very close relationship with the Congress and with the Secretary. He worked directly with the Secretaries and the Congress, almost around the normal legislative mechanisms that exist in the Department, and was really legendary as a leader and as a scientist, because his background had been very strong in science and his administrative skills, I think, came to be recognized after his scientific skills were recognized.

But Dr. Marston came in, whose background was not as strong in science and research. His had been as a Medical School Dean, as a Chancellor, and as Head of the Regional Medical Programs, as a distinguished person, as s Rhode's Scholar, a Markoe Fellow, and so he had his own credentials in that sense. But I think there was a tendency to feel that this man doesn't have the full stature and I think he, recognizing the problem, created the "triumvirate" of John Sherman, who was a strong deputy, an administrative person, and Dr. Berliner, who was recognized as a scientist and as the Deputy Director for Science. And so the triumvirate of the three of them, and I believe it was referred to as that sometime in that period. And so he felt that he had shored up any weaknesses perhaps that he might have personally--I'm not sure he would have put it that way--but certainly with strong science and strong administrative skill and himself coming into the situation.

Now, it should be recognized, I think, that Dr. Marston was, at times, called "The Golden Boy," because he was adopted very strongly by the Johnson Administration, put into the RMP, and this was an outright personal interest because of the President's personal interest in this program, and he picked Dr. Marston and thought very highly of him. And then, if you'll recall, the HSMHA--and I think I'm right about this--he was appointed as head of that before he became Director of NIH, and so there was a period there where he had been given the head-ship of a major agency and was pulled over from that to the Directorship of NIH when Dr. Shannon left. So, there may have been, in the scientific community, some feeling that this was more a political administrative person and not the pure scientist that they might have expected.

Harden: Well, did you feel, always, like you were in the inner circle there though? Did he consult you for most big policy decisions?

Whaley: Yes. It seemed to me the OD staff, the Director's staff, really worked very carefully together and worked well together.

Now, one of the other things that he had to deal with had to do with the Bureau of Health Manpower, which had been grafted onto NIH at the time he became Director. This was almost an alien operation. And it was a big operation. It had lots of money in it, and it was the source of funding for a lot of things at medical schools. And so the Bureau of Health Manpower was tied to NIH, I believe, at the time he was appointed, or just about at that time. So here was a new set of problems.

Also, the National Library of Medicine was, I believe, tied on at about that time. And so, on the Director's staff, when I came, he had Dr. Endicott, Ken Endicott, who was Head of the Bureau of Health Manpower, and he had Marty Cummings, Director of the National Library of Medicine, and these sat on the Director's Building 1 Staff in an attempt to pull these together.

Folkenberg: Just to follow up, Vicky, what did you do? Specifically what were some of your duties with Dr. Marston? I mean, were you mainly a speechwriter, mainly doing some outreach things? Sort of a picture of what you were doing during this time?

Whaley: One of the things that position has, it's a coordinating position for the actions of the institutes in the public affairs field because--varying--from time to time the Department gets very sensitive about what happens in press releases, for example. And, at the time I came, an enormous amount of time was wasted in developing and clearing press releases. It'd be some innocuous thing, but it had to be cleared by everybody and God and, not only at the institute level, but it came through the Building 1 level and cleared there by everyone, and then fortunately we didn't have too much of an Assistant Secretary's Office at that time, and it went on, however, to Public Affairs at the Departmental level. This clearance process was, itself, a time-consuming thing. That was one of the things. And trying to keep the institutes happy in what was happening, to what they wanted to get out, so they wouldn't feel too throttled. And this was a problem.

The other thing we had--and this is one of those bureaucratic things that one forgets--somewhere in the course of the hearings in the House, Mr. Flood had said he wanted a weekly report to him of things that were happening at NIH, good things, on research, and that had to go to him every week. Well, this was a major task, it turned out to be, a weekly report of that sort. It doesn't seem like it would be, but it turns out to be. And this, again, required the utmost of care and clearance. And this came to our office-- I'm not sure how it was originated. I think, maybe, a woman, Jane Stafford, who was in that office, who was herself an excellent person, would have put it together with the help of the institutes. But then it cleared carefully, personally, by the Deputy Director for Science and by Carl Leventhal, who was his Deputy. And this thing went off every week, and the Director himself became involved. This was one of the chores.

Another time-consuming chore about the same time was someone at the Secretary's Office decided that they needed a report of events, a kind of a morning report, once a week.

Is this too much detail?

Harden: No.

Whaley: Okay. Another of the duties at that time was the preparation of the Director's Report to the Secretary of events, and this would be, not only science--and we always hoped we would have at least one good event in science in the mix--but it would be administrative things, or even a fire or whatever. This was a kind of a news report to the Secretary.

Well, this was, again, something that required a lot of attention.

And then the normal personnel problems. We had one institute that was having real problems, a good sized operation, and some of the people may still be around. I won't go into detail on it. But it was big enough that they asked our office to investigate it. And so Irv Goldberg, who was my deputy at that time, and I, spent a lot of time interviewing every person who worked in this office--it was a good-sized office--and trying to evaluate how they fit in, whether they would fit in, and to try to suggest solutions to the Director of that Institute. So we were involved in this kind of thing.

And then, of course, the speeches. And then the sitting in long staff meetings and giving advice as to problems. And then the occasional brush fire where you don't know where the trouble is coming from, but it suddenly hits, and then you have to advise the Director of what to do and how do you deal with it.

I went with him to a number of the meetings of the Federation, for example the old Atlantic City meetings that were held, and there we did a lot of talking with grantees. And one of the particular meetings I went to with him was at the same time the Cancer Institute divorce was about to take place, or we thought it was then. We had to talk with many people about this and many people contacted, I'm sure, the Congress and everybody else about it.

So, these were the duties.

Harden: What kind of staff did you have to do this?

Whaley: At that time, we had probably about as many as the office now has. The immediate Office of the Associate Director had a Deputy, Irv Goldberg, and his secretary was Marilyn, I believe. Marilyn, at least, was over there and I believe she was his secretary. And we had Jane Stafford, who was our conscience, our science writer conscience, because neither Irv, nor I, had enough science to be respectable in this setting, and we depended on Jane Stafford to keep us straight, and she was there for a couple of years. And so that may have been a person that we don't even have quite like that now, although I guess we do have counterparts.

And then we had the Audiovisual Office, which was involved in producing some things, some radio things, not much, but some.

Then we had the News Branch, which was doing many of the things the News Branch does.

And the Editorial Operations, and perhaps staffed with more people than now. And so that was about the size of it.

I was concerned, coming from outside Government, not knowing my way around in the bureaucratic maze, to get help from someone like Irv Goldberg. Irv had been on the staff at the Secretary's level in the Public Affairs Office down there and had been a speechwriter for the Surgeon General and others, and was very well thought of throughout, and I relied a great deal on Irv keeping me out of trouble.

Folkenberg: According to *Science*, again, Robert Stone was relatively unknown before his appointment, and what was the scientific community's response to his appointment?

Whaley: Well, they were in an irritated mood. They had been traumatized somewhat by Dr. Marston's departure. And suddenly Dr. Stone, without any previous word, was announced--at least within channels--as the new Director of NIH, and they really didn't know him, and so I would say there was a negative reaction to him. They felt that we had-- The feeling was-- And I must explain my personal feelings here. At first, I didn't know what the heck was going on. I was concerned about it. But I learned to think very highly of Dr. Stone and, it turns out, in perspective, that I've considered him one of the really good Directors of NIH, at least personally. As far as dealing with him personally was concerned I found I liked him and liked to work with him, although he was an interesting guy in that he had an extremely dry sense of humor and a lot of people didn't understand him. He was a person you had to learn but, as I say, I liked him. But he was not liked when he first came. This is true.

Harden: My memory is that he might have been viewed as a political pawn; that the Nixon Administration was trying to get hold of these "loose cannons" out here at NIH, or some other medical-- And he had to more or less come and get to know people.

Whaley: Exactly. Yes, I think you've said it well. Because NIH was considered a renegade group. You may remember that this was a little ahead of my time, though it's something that happened while I was here, that the NIH was a source of protest against the Vietnam War.

Harden: We're going to get into that, as a matter of fact.

Whaley: It was a university campus, in a sense. It had an underground newspaper at some point. So, it was true that it was viewed with some alarm at the Departmental level, that this part of the Department was going to embarrass the Administration. So I think they felt that Dr. Marston had had too loose a hand in letting Spock speak here, for example, because he was recognized as a protestor at that time. And then we had Jane Fonda--we did--at some point.

Folkenberg: You had Jane Fonda here?

Whaley: Uh-huh. And so there was a feeling of uneasiness that this place was out of hand.

So, I guess I think maybe there was a feeling--certainly this was the rumor that was about--that he had been appointed to come out here and control this place, and that his training and his immediate background had been in management and he'd been at, what, MIT I guess, in management training, and perhaps on faculty there, and so he came with his management ideas to NIH.

But they were not well received. I mean, you can imagine that they weren't ready for this. But, I think, in time, people began to understand him and have a different feeling about him.

Harden: And he began to understand NIH, I believe.

Whaley: Then, of course, now I'm talking not from knowledge but perhaps from feeling, he bought NIH. In a sense he was co-opted by NIH and, for that reason then, became really *persona non* [*grata]* as far as downtown was concerned because had turned around on them, it looked like, and so it wasn't too surprising when he was relieved of his command.

Folkenberg: We're going to be getting to that, as a matter of fact, but anyway, I had talked to Mark Stern and he mentioned an incident where over one particular weekend you and Dr. Stone and, I'm presuming, others--I don't know this--had to deal with some kind of crisis, and Dr. Stone ended up typing the fastest and therefore doing most of the typing? Does this ring a bell? If this did happen, what was the crisis and what were the details?

Whaley: Oh, my! You know, I wish I could remember. I don't.

Harden: Okay. Well, he must have been thinking, then, just in terms that Stone was really willing to drop everything and pitch in.

Whaley: Oh, yes, he was.

Folkenberg: Did he, in fact, know how to type? I'm just curious.

Whaley: Yes, I'm sure he did. I'm sure he did. I'm not sure if he had a computer, but I'm sure he thought about it.

Harden: Okay. Well, let's come back to some of the broader things that we had touched on in terms of maybe talking a bit about the climate around here during these years. You mentioned the Vietnam protest. I want to hear more about the underground newspaper, civil rights issues, major problems, those kinds of things.

Whaley: Yes. Well, it's hard for me to give you much more than I have. I've been trying to think of the name of that paper.

Harden: Was this an official or-- Who was publishing it, the scientists?

Whaley: It was published by a group of young scientists, those who-- The Protest Committee had a name.

Harden: We can look it up.

Whaley: And it would be worth checking it out. And they invited these speakers. And Marston, from his academic background, had sense enough to know you couldn't turn these things off, nor should you. And therefore his feeling was, you know, let it happen. And this went against the grain for some of the political lives. They were greatly concerned about this.

Harden: This was also a high point with regard to civil rights issues, and the Government actually was out in front on many things. Do you have any recollections of specific incidences?

Whaley: No, I don't have. I know, again, that Marston's background, he was a very strong civil rights person in, of all places, Jackson, Mississippi, and had been very courageous in the situation there at the time the University of Mississippi was having problems. It's main campus was different. But he had held his ground. And so his view was that when he came into the setting here. And I don't think we had a lot of-- If we had civil rights unrest, I'm not aware of it, to the degree that perhaps it developed at a later time.

Harden: I was just thinking in terms of things I've seen about when the first minority person was appointed to a study section. I think it was in the '70s. And all sorts of things like that. You had a lot of firsts going on, I believe.

Whaley: Yes. There were a lot of firsts. And, I guess, Tom Malone was the first Associate Director to be appointed. But this was so in keeping with what I expected of Marston really that, I guess, is why it doesn't register very much with me.

Harden: As anything unusual?

Whaley: Uh-huh. Yes. As a-- It was courageous, in a sense. It was different. I don't think it was what you would call courageous in this setting, but it was what I would have expected him to do.

Harden: Well, one more thing, little thing here, with regard to social issues. There had been a fair amount of black-listing going on during the McCarthy era, and that was coming to an end when you arrived. Was there any holdover that you recall?

Whaley: No. We kept hearing that it had happened, and that there were some people who apparently were black-listed in the McCarthy period, but it was not an issue at the time I came here. It was something we heard about. But I didn't feel that kind of tension.

Folkenberg: To follow up on Vicky's, as I remember it, *Science* also mentioned there was a petition in 1972 signed by 500 NIH scientists urging Nixon to end all U.S. involvement in the war which Eliot Richardson declined to send on to the President and, apparently Marston--they implied--Marston sent it on to the White House? Do you remember anything about that?

Whaley: No. I wonder if he did. I don't recall that. I can recall-- I do recall, I believe, it going to the Department, but I doubt if he would have gone to the White House around the Secretary. It would have-- No, I don't think so. Now, this was the Vietnam Committee, you know, that did that, and I had forgotten that it was that late, but it's true, and it must have been about then that Spock and Fonda and others showed up here.

Folkenberg: I was going to follow up on another thing. Apparently John Sherman resigned in '74 and he let it be known through a series of frank interviews what he thought of the Nixon Administration, and then this warranted a letter of rebuttal from Charles Edwards, who was Assistant Secretary of HEW, to *The Post*, and there was all this going on, and apparently Stone did not get along very well with Charles Edwards?

Whaley: Well, he was appointed by Edwards originally but, as time went on, I think that's where the alienation I was talking about, the sort of turning, and in time then he didn't get along well with him. I think this is true. But I think Edwards brought him in and I believe he was an Edwards' at least sponsored person.

Folkenberg: But their fights, did their altercations spill out into the papers sometimes, into *The Post*?

Whaley: Oh, I think it was perhaps hinted at in *The Blue Sheet* perhaps and others, but I don't recall, however, being directly involved in this, that is our office. We would have-- If, for instance-- No, I just don't think we would have been. That's not the kind of thing we would get into, you know, with writing letters to *The Post*. I think we would have strongly advised him not to do it.

Folkenberg: Actually, I think, Charles Edwards wrote the letter to *The Post*.

Whaley: Yes. But I don't believe Stone would have done that.

Folkenberg: Gerald Ford established the Freedom of Information Act in 1974, and I was curious what role did you have, or your office have, in enforcing the Act and what were some of the problems that came about, about that?

Whaley: Well, let's see, the Freedom of Information Act had been in existence from the '60s, I believe, and then the '74 amendments really put teeth in it. It became, really, an operating concern at that time. And the earliest versions of it were interpreted to mean very wide open on everything. I mean, it was one of those scary things that everybody then became very concerned about. And the responsibility was put on our office to be the Freedom of Information Office for the NIH and, actually--I believe this still exists--the Associate Director reports directly on this to the Freedom of Information at the Departmental level, and it's a responsibility in the office that's assigned to the office, not to the Director of NIH, which is strange, but it's the way it is.

But I think our first concerns had to do with opening council meetings. Council meetings, at that time, were not open, as I recall. I think the-- You see, the public-- The committee-- The legislation having to do with committees came along at about the same time and, of course, it was the committee legislation that concerned things like the advisory councils and should we have grant applications discussed in an advisory council that was public. This was a big concern.

Well, you know, as time went on, we learned how to live with these things, and that they weren't as bad as everybody thought. You know, there was a feeling that you could never get people to give good advice if they had to do it in public.

Harden: This had to do also, at the same time there were all sorts of these "sunshine" things, and I guess it was under Freedom of Information that the grantees who had gotten turned down wanted to see their pink sheets?

Whaley: That's right.

Harden: And didn't the comments become public, or at least some of them?

Whaley: That's right. And this was another--

Harden: And all of this fed in together.

Whaley: This got a lot of concern, and there was a lot of soul-searching about it. And there was even a concern that went back to the '60s about putting comments in writing on applications. I think study sections had been cautioned about what kinds of writings they did, because they could foresee the time when this would become open.

The concerns I remember having to do with that '74 tightening of Freedom of Information, we were required to create what was called an "Index" in the original language, an "Index of Information" at NIH, which is about as massive a task as you can think of. And we had a fellow, Harold Osborne, a very conscientious guy, in my office who tried to do this, and it was just an awful task. That's one of my memories of that period.

And, of course, the other is that we suddenly started getting these public requests for information about things, for documents, that might exist that some of which were so outrageous that we wouldn't pay a lot of attention to them. And I became the victim of one of those that became almost a saga in itself. This was a person who obviously was having some kind of problem, who was convinced that we were irradiating him from here, and he was in California. And he had sent telegrams to all the institute directors about this and asked for their immediate reply under Freedom of Information.

And so I realized what was going on and got word to the institute directors, maybe at a directors' meeting, and asked them to turn him over to our office and we would deal with him.

Well, we started dealing with him until it became apparent that we couldn't satisfy him. It wasn't possible. He wanted the floor plan of every foot of space that the NIH operated, and this kind of thing.

Well, at some point I did what you perhaps shouldn't do. I just stopped responding to him. I just let it die. But it didn't die. He threatened to go into Federal Court and did, apparently, frighten the General Counsel's Office to where they ordered me to start complying with this man's requests, whatever they were. Oh, this is where the floor plan thing-- And we did it.

Folkenberg: You sent him a floor plan?

Whaley: A floor plan of buildings, because he was convinced that there was some building we had here that had this radiating equipment in it that was sending these things to California and hurting him. And then he got it in his mind that it was a group of Italian surnamed people at NIH who were doing this and he went to the Department for this, got the full Departmental payroll, and went through it carefully enough to where he could identify people who were working overtime, who would be working on a 24-hour a day, because this was a 24-hour a day thing. And so he figured out how many hours you'd be working if you were a part of a team running this 24-hours a day.

And so then he started sending letters--

Folkenberg: To these people?

Whaley: To people, as he identified them, because he had the payroll, he had the names. And somehow, he had someone here that was helping him, or something. Well, he came back here three times that I know of and got the phone book and these letters were going to the homes. And then he would write, "Did you know that your husband is involved in..." And it frightened people. So we collected those and at some time, in the file over there, we had some 30 or 40 such letters that were sent as registered mail or certified mail to the people here.

So then he said he wanted to visit, and so he did come back and visit, and he had in mind by that time that it the machine was located at our Poolesville Animal Center. And so I arranged to have him go out to Poolesville. I thought, well, it's not fair to send a driver out there with him, without somebody to help contain this man if he's violent, you know, so I got hold of NIMH and, at that time it was not a part of NIH, and they had people over in the Clinical Center, and they said, "We're not going to send anybody out there with that crazy man." And we had to hire somebody. We hired a psychiatrist to go along, an undercover psychiatrist.

Folkenberg: Was he the driver?

Harden: No, in addition.

Whaley: In addition to the driver. He went out to a company. Plus, the fellow who knew about the-- I guess it was Whitney, Bob Whitney, that went along with them. But, as I say, I got worried about maybe we were subjecting somebody, so I then--to cap this story off, which I shouldn't have started--they brought him back to my office at 5:00 in the afternoon.

So, this man started asking me questions about our buildings, and he knew a lot more about the buildings of NIH than I did. He had studied the NIH Almanac from cover to cover, with great care, and he was throwing names of buildings around and I didn't know where they were.

The Auburn Building. At that time I had no idea where the Auburn Building was. But, then I woke up about 6:00 o'clock to the fact that Building 1 had become deserted, and I was up there with this man by myself--

Harden: With no undercover psychiatrist.

Whaley: I had no psychiatrist to protect me. But it turned out it was fine, and I actually took him to the bus and got him on the bus, and it was okay.

But then he came back again and visited these places. And then one third time visited here.

I don't know where he got his money--because obviously it was expensive to do this--and his information, but this is a Freedom of Information story where it can be carried out to an absolute extreme.

Harden: Well, more to the point, to the people here, as I recall, there were some inquiries--I think it was Dr. Wallace Rowe--who ran up against people wanting his laboratory notebooks and--

Whaley: Right. And then I think we went through a good deal of legal advice in getting the situation curtailed there to where some of these things could be held and some not. Of course, the Gallo problem, which was happening when I left, was a prime example of how Freedom of Information can be manipulated to practically stop an agency in its tracks. It was awful.

Harden: We interviewed Dr. Gallo for the AIDS Oral History Series and had that FOIA'ed instantly. I'd never had an oral history sought like that, but it was.

But, at any rate, was the office, the FOIA Office, already here, or did--

Whaley: No. We established it.

Harden: So the earlier, the '60s, legislation had not been--

Whaley: We hadn't done anything with it. Actually, I think there was sort of a moral feeling you should be open, but that's about the extent of it. Nobody really worried much about it.

But we had on our staff then Bowen Hosford, who was a lawyer, and naturally it fell to Bo to run the Freedom of Information Office. And then he employed Joanne, and so that's really the evolution. But we established the FOI Office.

Harden: Very good. So that takes that right back to the beginning.

Let's talk about Dr. Stone's firing. He was fired summarily in January, '75. And can you talk about what happened and how that was received? And I think there were a fair number of people who resigned in the wake of that.

Whaley: No. I wasn't aware of a mass exodus at that point.

Harden: I guess I thought Berliner did, and maybe some others?

Whaley: Yes. I think it may be that-- I had the feeling that Berliner left before Stone did.

Harden: Well, maybe I have the sequence of events off?

Whaley: Yes, I believe so, because I believe Berliner had left, so that there was whatever kind of exodus was gradually occurring was happening perhaps during the Stone period. I can't remember when Kennedy, Tom Kennedy, left.

Harden: That's right. He left. But all of that was in response to the idea that there was too much politics being injected in here, as I recall?

Whaley: Right. There was a feeling that the NIH was being politicized. I think that was what it came down to. And these other people, for one reason or another, left. I'm trying to think now, who was the Acting Director between Marston and Stone was Sherman?

Harden: Yes.

Whaley: And then the Acting Director after Stone was Lamont Havers?

Harden: Yes.

Whaley: It's very difficult, by the way, for a person who has been Acting Director to stay very long after that. I mean, that's a kind of a natural phenomenon. And I think you'll see that in the history.

Harden: And how did you think those two Acting Directors discharged their duties?

Whaley: I think extremely well. I enjoyed working with, in fact, all of the Acting Directors that I have known or worked with. John Sherman is a person whose judgement I've always had a great respect for, and as a person I've enjoyed knowing him. And the same thing with Lamont Havers. He was very easy to work with. He understood our problems in our office and I enjoyed working with him. And then, of course Bill Raub, the same thing. It was a very easy, comfortable with these Acting Directors.

Folkenberg: I guess Stone was here for about two years. What were some of his strengths and weaknesses, or his strengths and quirks, as a leader here, in his relationship with you? Does anything stand out in your mind about--

Whaley: I think he did-- I think his philosophy was to let you do your job, and I always felt that from him, that he respected the people who worked with him, and even in my job, and would back off if we had advice for him. So, I think that's one of his strengths in that he did, I think, respect organization. He tried to get perhaps more management philosophy of the sort of traditional academic management philosophy, and not very successfully, because I think this place resists that. I think it would have been tough on any Director to do that.

His personal relationships, I think, were perhaps spotty, in that some people liked him and some people didn't. I think this was perhaps more than most Directors in that sense. As I say, his sense of humor was so dry that a lot of people would think he was insulting them when he really wasn't. It was not a happy career for him. I think this is true.

He tried some innovative things. One of his interesting things he did was the Director's Advisory Committee, which is a group that, in the past--I think more in recent years it's been better--but at the time he came in they had this committee and didn't quite know what to do with it. I think this was true in Marston and I think this was true in Stone and may have been early in Wyngaarden. But he had them meet in California, instead of here, but he had figured it out that there were more of them in California than there were--that is more on the West Coast than on the East Coast--and so we had a meeting in Pasadena one time which, I don't guess has been repeated, but it was a sort of an interesting Stone idea.

Harden: All right. Let's move on to-- Well, did you want to follow up on that?

Folkenberg: No. I'm fine.

Harden: --to Dr. Fredrickson, who, after this period of short Directorships under Marston and Stone, then had a long tenure. And I recall writing Dr. Fredrickson when I was doing my first book. I sent him a copy in which I had said he seemed to bring some stability. And he wrote back to me and said, "I think it was more than "seemed." So do you want to comment on how things changed when he came here?

Whaley: Yes. I think there was a general feeling of comfort when Fredrickson was appointed. Here was someone that they knew, someone who had been here a long time, highly respected and recognized as articulate. He had been away for a year. Remember, he went to the Institute of Medicine for a year before coming back as Director. And I would say there was generally a very good feeling about him. They felt that perhaps this period of being buffeted in the political wars maybe had been sort of ended.

And he came in with ideas and was an interesting leader and, I think, a very powerful leader at an important time. One of his great contributions was that he helped to defuse this recombinant DNA battle and let it become a useful technique. And it might have been held back years and Congressional action could have stopped it in its tracks, because there was enough "superstition," almost, about it and he, I think, handled it very wisely and very publicly. But it was an interesting period when he was Director.

Harden: Dr. Stetten was very much involved with that. He had appointed Dr. Stetten as Head of the Committee.

Whaley: That's right.

Harden: And Dr. Stetten felt very strongly about how they had managed to forestall legislation. But I think there may have been some tension between Stetten and Fredrickson because Fredrickson felt that he had to make rules, or guidelines--or whatever word was chosen--that were a little firmer than what Dr. Stetten had wanted. Can you comment on that?

Whaley: Well, I think there was that tension. It perhaps reflected the fact that I believe Dr. Fredrickson was seeing it perhaps from the more pragmatic view that to get this accepted it was necessary to give some assurances for people to feel confident that the nation would be protected against whatever might happen from this. And I think maybe Dr. Stetten had more the pure scientist's view. And it was a sort of a natural tension, in a way, that grew up over this. And, of course, Dr. Fredrickson had to take the lead, and he had to be out in front with this, after a certain point. He had Dr. Stetten in the early stages of it, when the unusual scientific decision was made to voluntarily stop research on a promising field. That moratorium was news, when five leading scientists said, "This might be dangerous. We don't know. But we don't think we'd better do it until we've had a look at it and can prescribe some rules." And so this was an interesting period that Fredrickson happened to be just right for. And he had the feel of doing this thing openly enough that the public would feel that it had been done with the best interests of the public in mind.

Harden: How did he use the Communications Office?

Whaley: He used us to help get word out. He recognized that we could be useful in this. But he had a particular contribution in this to make that I don't know if you have in your notes that I think would be useful to talk about. Again, you see, we'd been going through this recurring business of "Get the word out, you'd better get the word out, or you're in trouble," and one of the things that happened early on when I was here was in the--and probably this would have been '71 or '72--the Senate Committee again put language in that, "You've got to disseminate the results of research and disseminate the word about NIH, and this time we mean it. And we want you to show what you've done. We want, within 30 days, or 60 days, a plan, and then we want regular stewardship reports on what you have done with the plan."

And so one of the jobs that I had early on was to develop this plan and prepare it and get it sent down to the Senate as to what we would do to "improve the dissemination of research results." And we had a number of projects that we put forward at that time. We tried to find anything in the world we could, because here we were desperate. We had to do something.

And we did do some experiments there. We had, for instance, the use of the satellite. The Library of Medicine had just gotten cooperation going with a Canadian health satellite, and so we held, I guess--(end of Tape 1.)

Harden: Go ahead. You were in the middle of--

Whaley: So, this report was prepared and, as I recall, the real onus was put on us during the end of the Stone regime, and Lamont Havers signed off on our sending this report to the Congressional Committee, to the Senate Committee, as to the various things we would do, including that satellite, including an investigation into the Alabama method they had of getting all the doctors together on a phone referral basis. I've forgotten the name for it, but it was a system they had. And several examples of that kind.

And one of the things, and I don't know if this has survived or not, that we started was this monthly page in the JAMA that was a suggestion that this committee made.

Harden: "From the NIH?"

Whaley: "From the NIH," attempting to tie us more closely into the practice of medicine.

Well, when Fredrickson came on board, this report had gone in, the Committee had accepted it, and then said, "Okay, now we want a report on what you've done with this." Well, this sort of caught Fredrickson's imagination and he kept pushing. He appointed a committee, a Committee on the Dissemination of Research Results, and had some good people, and we started around with these various recommendations that had been made.

In the meantime, he was working on a sort of parallel track and kept ruminating on this subject, and finally gave birth to the Office for Medical Applications of Research, which was really his answer to this question of getting the word out. It was his response, in a sense, to the Senate, and I think it was a great idea. I wish we had thought of it, but we didn't. But that was his contribution.

Harden: What about the Consensus Development Conferences? Now, those came along later.

Whaley: That's what that was.

Harden: Oh, the two of them go together?

Whaley: Yes. It's the same thing.

Harden: I'm sorry. I didn't realize that it was out of the same office.

Whaley: Uh-huh.

Folkenberg: Are you finished?

Harden: Yes.

Folkenberg: Okay. I'm not sure NIH had a role in this, but I just thought I'd ask real quickly, did you have much of a role in the swine flu vaccination problems, or Legionnaire's disease?

Whaley: No. We watched it, but I don't think we-- We weren't-- I have no memory of being in any way involved.

Harden: Which, of course, when the AIDS comes up and they all said that NIH was spending tons of money, we actually traced out what we spent, and basically it was no-- I think we're probably at the Waxman Bill, huh?

Folkenberg: All right. Apparently in '80 and '83 there was the Waxman Bill legislation which would give Congress more control over NIH, review their research, review their budgets. What was your role in this crisis? I'm sure everyone here was fairly--

Whaley: Yes. This had happened before. There was some kind of a committee in the early '70s that Kennedy pushed that the Director appointed an advisory group that reported on. Our role really wasn't very heavy in that in my office. As a member of the staff of the Director there was a lot of talk in the staff meetings, but as far as our doing much about it, no, we didn't get involved much.

Harden: Now, when Fredrickson's term came to an end, I had just moved to this area, and my memory is the report was that he just got tired of fighting the battles over and over and over, but there must have been a final straw, and I wondered if you could comment on that?

Whaley: No. I think, let's see, Califano was Secretary, I believe, at that point.

Harden: Yes. I think so. July, '81.

Whaley: And I think it was sort of one rebuff after another in the sense, and I was never quite sure what did it. I remember he called us in and told us that he was going to resign.

Folkenberg: Were you surprised?

Whaley: Yes. Uh-huh.

Harden: It came with-- Nobody had been thinking this would happen?

Whaley: No. And one of the most ticklish things we did in my office as an operational activity, he wanted to meet with as many as he could of NIH people and be the first to tell them. And how do you call a meeting in the Auditorium of NIH for the next morning and somebody from *The Post* not being smart enough to know what's going on? And we really had a bad night of that one. Mark, and Anne and I were all under fire on that. We were doing our best to preserve it, and we did.

Harden: So, *The Post* didn't find out?

Whaley: *The Post* didn't find out, although by 11:00 o'clock, or 10:30, Vic Cohen was sniffing something, and we simply wouldn't answer our phones. We just ducked. Because what could you do? I think he asked Ann. I think he caught Ann. But I was at home and not taking any phone calls and what was happening, I was getting a call a minute, and what was going on was that he was calling Mark and Mark was calling me, and I didn't know who was calling, of course.

(Laughter.)

Folkenberg: What was Fredrickson like as a boss?

Whaley: Very easy going, a very easy fellow to be with. Fredrickson is a complex person. His office is-- One memory of his office was that his desk was covered with an oriental rug.

Folkenberg: His desk was covered with an oriental rug?

Whaley: An oriental rug. Uh-huh. And he had little milk stools that were in his office that were used when he had an overflow crowd. And if he had a staff meeting that was more than the chairs, usually-- Not usually. His chairs were all antique, nice pieces. You were always a little bit afraid you'd break one of them. And these milk stools were used for overflow.

Harden: Now this was his personal decorating budget as opposed to Government-funded?

Whaley: That's right. Uh-huh. Yes.

Harden: I had a sense that he was always--

Whaley: No. This was his own.

Folkenberg: Now, I have to follow through on one gossipy rumor. Did you remember the interview in *The New York Times* with his wife that was fairly embarrassing?

Whaley: Oh, that would have been later.

Folkenberg: Was that later?

Whaley: Yes. I think that was when he was at Howard Hughes.

Folkenberg: Oh, okay. That's where I'm mixing apples with oranges. Okay. Did she have much of a role? Did she interfere much when he was here as Director?

Whaley: No. She-- Well, the things I knew about that she did was she wanted him to come home. She didn't like him to stay at the office too late. And that was for his own good really, in a way. But, you know, some wives are this way. And, I mean, she was insistent.

Folkenberg: That he come home?

Whaley: That he come home, and he did. I mean, she would call Belle Sayha, who was his Secretary, and keep after her until she got him home because she felt that he shouldn't be working late, which is probably right.

Harden: Dr. Fredrickson also had an interesting personal style in his speeches, the ones I have read. Now here are three Directors so far--we've got Marston, Stone and Fredrickson--and you were probably working with all three of them on speeches?

Whaley: Yes. Stone was pretty straightforward. In fact, one anecdote about him. He announced a plan that I thought was very forward looking where we funded a science writer to do a kind of sabbatical chore, and these were appointed by a committee, and I think we had the Association of Science Writers make the choice, and this was an NIH direct procurement where we funded a science writer to do something that he said he wanted to do. It didn't have to be here. It was related to science in some way. And it was a Stone accepted idea. I think it was cooked up among us. But, in any case, the speech he made announcing this to the science writers, as he got halfway through it, he made a statement there that Irv Goldberg had written and he looked up from the copy and said, "Irv, that was a good statement. I believe that." And, by the way, he insisted that our names be on speeches that we coauthored with him, which is unusual, very unusual.

Now, Fredrickson was different in that was very hard to write for him. To write with him was great fun. It was an experience to brainstorm with him. But his flair and his ability to phrase things was such that it was almost a lost task to try to write a word-for-word speech. He would use the framework, he would use a good deal of it, but always he put his touch on it. And he didn't make a lot of speeches, which was fortunate, because it took a lot of time.

Harden: Now, one of the big crises that hit in November, '81, which again I ran afoul of trying to get hold of the Cancer Archives--Paul Van Ebel, who wasn't sure who I was at that time--at any rate there were serious charges leveled at NCI about failure to inform patients of the toxic side effects of drugs and failure to report adverse effects and unauthorized testing. You may recall this. *The Post* ran a big series on NCI at that time about gross mismanagement, and on, and on, and on.

I know a lot of the institutes, when it's good news it's theirs, when it's bad news it's the front office's. And did you have to deal with it on that level?

Whaley: First, we were aware of what was going on and that this was coming, and we dreaded it. We didn't know what would happen. But, I'll have to say that after reading the first one, not because it wasn't really virulent in a way in its attack, but because it was so long, we decided we didn't have much to worry about. And it turned out to be true; that it was just over-written, way over-stated, until we had very little--in our office--back-wash from it. We didn't hear a lot. It's interesting. But it was one we dreaded, and then it didn't turn out as badly as we feared.

Folkenberg: That's good. In April of '82, Wyngaarden was appointed. Was his appointment expected, because we know how the "rumor mill" runs, which is so-and-so, and so-and-so, and then either you're surprised because no one on the list is appointed, or someone on the list was. So, was there--

Whaley: His name was one among several, I think, being bandied about at the time. I think it was a little bit of a surprise, but again he's well thought of and I think we felt it was a good appointment. A little bit of surprise in that he was a Democrat.

Folkenberg: Oh, that's right. I'd forgotten about that. Okay, what were his priorities, and how did he differ from Fredrickson?

Whaley: He was very concerned, at that point, having come out of the academic setting, about manpower, person-power, in the medical field and in the need particularly for clinician-scientists. That had been a real battle cry of his, and something that he had written quite a lot about before he came on as Director. And I think that was one of his strong interests at the time he came.

Harden: He also was much-- I got the sense that he was a man of fewer words, whereas Fredrickson liked to talk and articulate his views more. Is that right?

Whaley: In a sense that was true. They were very different in that way, in their communication. And one of the things--I've told him this so I guess I'm not afraid to say it--that if we could just keep him from reading his speeches, he could articulate extremely well, and his statements that he made were gems, and when he spoke *ad lib* he could speak very well, but if you gave him a speech to read, he'd get his head in it and read it--and obviously read it--and the delivery tended to put people to sleep.

Harden: He suffered some under protest from anti-abortionists, I believe, because of a remark he made, didn't he?

Whaley: The first crisis we had with him, we thought we did a great job of trying to-- By this time, after all, we'd introduced several Directors, and with some experience, and we thought, "We'll do this one right." So Anne and I spent a lot of time with him before he made his first appearance to the press. We held the press off and said, "We're going to hold a press briefing when the time comes. Leave him alone now, and we'll deliver him at a certain date," which we did.

In the meantime, Anne and I thought up every question we could ever think of and sat down and went through these drills with him. And one of the questions, of course, was, "Dr. Wyngaarden, how do you feel about the abortion issue?" And his immediate response to us was, "Well, I'm in favor of choice." And we said, "Now wait a minute. You know, this is not your-- You don't have to get into this issue. It affects us only as we do research on it, in that the law is clear in that we can't do research on abortion as a means for population control." And he sort of acted like he agreed with us, or heard us. But, when the question was put to him in a press conference, he gave exactly that answer and they nearly died downtown, of course. Here this was, I guess, Reagan, and the Assistant Secretary for Health, of course, had pushed Wyngaarden, and this was--

Folkenberg: I don't know who--

Harden: I do, if I can remember.

Whaley: The Almanac will show who it was. And, you--

Harden: Brandt.

Whaley: Yes. Brandt. And here, suddenly, this thing had erupted. And it did make news. And it was a very hot potato. But, I guess, the main thing that was done, everybody advised him to get out of reach for a few days and let's not add more to this, and so it died.

Harden: He just left town?

Whaley: Yes. That's essentially what happened.

Harden: Well, while this was happening, in 1981, or '82, when he was first appointed, also we were having the beginnings of the AIDS epidemic. Now, can you talk about your earliest memories of AIDS from a communications point of view?

Whaley: I remember Dr. Robert Gordon, who was then sort of, oh, an advisor to the Director--I'm not sure what his title was--but he was a senior scientist who had been Director of the Clinical Center and had opted out of that job, really had resigned-- I don't think he liked administration--and was really a close advisor, highly respected, in our office.

Now, I hope I'm not getting off the track here, but I think I'm right. Anyhow, he first became aware of this, whatever it was, this immune deficiency problem that wasn't really named at that point, and then began to see the figures coming in on the numbers and kept talking about "exponential." I can hear him talking about "Exponential growth, exponential growth. We've got a terrible problem."

Folkenberg: So he was sort of like a prophet? He recognized that--

Whaley: He was. Indeed, he was. And he was about the only one in Building 1 that was talking that much about it. Now, there were others who were concerned, but he was the one that kept saying that and was the messenger. And this would have been probably in the year before it had a name. It was when they were thinking that this inhalant might be the cause of it, this thing, that drug, whatever it was.

Harden: This was '82. It was early '82, I think, is when that committee was set up that he chair of and, you're right, that's exactly the time. And it was mid-'82 when they connected it with hemophiliacs and started thinking infection.

Whaley: That's right. At that point they were sort of floundering around wondering what the cause might be and where it was coming from.

Harden: But you didn't have any communications problems until when?

Whaley: Then, after it became clear that this was big, and it began to get out nationally and people began to get alarmed about it, then the Assistant Secretary's Office decided that they should control it, and so it became a matter of attempting to control the news contacts on something as emotional and as of great interest as this was at the time. And we had to be extremely careful. They were really on us all the time. We were really not supposed to talk about it here.

Harden: That's interesting. Can you tell us more about this? Because you have the Assistant Secretary's Office controlling it, and there was also the Surgeon General's Office, and I know the Surgeon General and the Assistant Secretary had their differences on this.

Whaley: Uh-huh. Well, he hadn't quite come into it at that point. This was pre the Surgeon General talking much about it.

Folkenberg: You mean pre-Koop?

Whaley: Yes. Uh-huh.

Harden: Yes. And Koop and Brandt--

Whaley: Yes. Koop was there, but Koop was being kept really under wraps, practically in a straight-jacket. They really kept him out of the-- Because he was considered a "loose cannon." You see, Koop didn't really emerge until Brandt was no longer Assistant Secretary. I mean, somebody kind of let him loose. And he was not considered an heroic figure in the early time. He was considered, you know, a kind of a political appointment. That's what he really was. They thought he was, you know, very strong on the anti-abortion side, and that was why he was appointed, and that was kind of all that was considered.

But, in any case, this was a little before that, and there was concern that we would set off a national wave of hysteria, and so they wanted to try to control information contacts. And we really had a hard time dealing with that. It was difficult.

Folkenberg: Well then, when you would get a phone call from a reporter, would you buck it upstairs to--

Whaley: Yes. We would just buck it to-- We'd say they have to talk about this downtown. Shelly Linville was the Information Officer at that time.

Harden: Anne talks about Rock Hudson's death as being the sort of watershed when all this came out into the open.

Whaley: Yes. Rock Hudson's death. It did. It would get under control for a while, and then something like that would happen. I think we were sort of into it by that time.

One of the persistent rumors that we kept having was the movie star in the cross country car trips, the comedies, married-- Good Lord!

Folkenberg: You're not thinking about "Easy Rider?"

Whaley: Yes. Oh--

Folkenberg: "Easy Rider" is the motorcycle one.

Whaley: Oh, no. No. This is the one with Jackie Gleason as the Sheriff.

Folkenberg: Burt Reynolds?

Whaley: Burt Reynolds. The press had Burt Reynolds in our Clinical Center practically every week, and we would just say, "No." But then we got to wondering ourselves. Of course, they don't take people under assumed names over there, but then we got to wondering, well, maybe Burt Reynolds is not really his name anyway. But then we discovered that it really is his name. That's not a movie name. But he was never there.

Harden: But you did have Roy Cohn in the Clinical Center.

Whaley: Yes, we did. And that was one of the very difficult episodes we had, because he was insisting--and his attorney was insisting--that his diagnosis not ever be made public. And, of course, we didn't give diagnoses on a patient but, when a patient dies, he loses his privacy.

Harden: And then Freedom of Information comes in.

Whaley: And then Freedom of Information hit us there. And that one was a difficult one because they were demanding his medical record, and it would have been really criminal, I think, to release that. And, fortunately, in the medical record is his psychiatric record. It had family members mentioned. And it gave us a way of protecting their privacy, and so we withheld it.

Folkenberg: But didn't it get out in the press eventually what he died of?

Whaley: Oh, yes. Yes.

Harden: Right. But not the gory details, as it were.

Whaley: Yes. It was speculation. But this medical record would have fueled stories for a long time to come.

Harden: One more AIDS question and then we'll move on here. The big NIH controversy over AIDS, of course, had to do with Dr. Gallo and Dr. Montagnier and the discovery. What kind of role did Communications have in that?

Whaley: Well, of course, we were involved in that pretty much head-on, except when it finally got down to almost a war of attrition over Freedom of Information requests from this particular reporter from *The Chicago Tribune* who was pushing on it so hard. And we did become involved in some of the-- We were caught in the crossfire between Pasteur and Gallo. Some of the people over there, as you may recall, were making public statements. And then one of the scientists at Pasteur was accused of some very bad faith in treating some AIDS patients, who was really a friend of Gallo's, who had worked with Gallo, and I know he became concerned about what was happening to his friend and asked what we could do to help with getting some of the statements straightened out that were in the Paris press. And we were able to help a little bit with that, at least through the American Embassy, to get some releases through the Embassy, because some of them were flatly not true that were coming out there.

There was something I was going to say.

Harden: Did you all play any role in that international agreement where--

Whaley: We sat in on it. I sat in on the meeting where it was finally formulated, and it was formulated as to what we would say about it, but that was an NCI thing. In other words, I just simply advised them and the NCI Information Office did it.

One of the things that was one of those things that you sort of stay awake nights about was when we began to have infections of people who were working in Frederick. There was an operation going on up there that they were concentrating the virus, I believe, for purposes of research, and two people showed up with it and, of course, the great concern was that it had become aerosol, that is it could be caught through the air, and this really had everybody worried. And finally both these people realized what had happened, why they had--their skin had broken--how they had gotten it. And then, of course, we had a case or two here, nurses, and it causes a very difficult press problem that you have to be very careful with it.

Folkenberg: To leave AIDS for a minute, as I remember, Wyngaarden disapproved of the establishment of a separate Arthritis Institute, but Mary Lasker wanted it, and it seemed like what Mary Lasker wanted, she got. I'm more interested in what was Mary Lasker's role and influence and getting her way, whatever her-- Did you have much dealings with her, because I know she was such a pivotal figure in the medical research field?

Whaley: Well, I don't remember that separate institute thing. I wonder if that meant "bureau status," rather than separate institute?

Folkenberg: They were bringing out the Arthritis. It was already in one institute and they were going to create another special institute for it.

Harden: It was turned down and then it was--

Folkenberg: I think the Senate brought it up again. My concern was more what about Mary Lasker. How did you deal with her?

Whaley: Yes. She was one of those very strong forces that I think had an enormous amount to do with the growth of NIH, and particularly in the late-'60s and on into the '70s, in that she knew how to sell the idea of more money for research, and she took that as a personal mission, and it grew out of the death of her husband and her interest in doing something, and she had the money to do it, and the political influence. And so I think she is one of those positive forces that has--

But in using, or taking advantage of it, you always are going to have some problems on the side, in that she may not go exactly the way you want her to go, and that this can create some differences.

But I think generally she's been a very positive force, but it's one that Directors had to be mindful of and mindful that they had to spend some time talking with her so that she would understand. And, of course, she was subject to her advisors and she had some very strong people who advised her, that is the people who worked with her and for her.

So, you know, I think, through the history of NIH there have been people like this who have institutes--and what's her name, I'm trying to think of it, for whom the Institute on Aging is practically a monument, she lives in Georgetown--but it was a personal crusade with her.

Folkenberg: Just to touch on the animal rights activists issues, I know that during the '80s they became more vocal, and I remember there was a week-long sit-in by PETA at the Neurology Institute. Do you remember that?

Whaley: Oh, yes.

Folkenberg: I have a girlfriend who worked there at the time. She tickled my memory. And I believe they lived here and literally were in the halls. Now, what did happen?

Whaley: Yes. They came in on a Monday morning.

Folkenberg: This was PETA, I believe. Right?

Whaley: This was PETA. And it so happened that they mingled with the people who were coming to work around 8:30 or 9:00 on a Monday morning.

Folkenberg: Now, did you know they were going to come in?

Whaley: No. No. But they had told the press. They had told everyone but us. And my first news of it was that I had a call from *The Bethesda Gazette*, asking permission to go up and do photography at the demonstration. "What demonstration?" And it turned out they told me about it, and then about that time we started hearing from it. But apparently they had advised her in advance and I don't know why she called us to get permission but, in any case, they did, and about 9:00 or 9:30 in the morning on a Monday, took over the whole floor of the Neurology Institute and literally unseated Murray Goldstein, the Director, sort of just dumped him out of his chair in his office, and took over.

Folkenberg: And by "taking over," they literally went into the offices?

Whaley: They went into the offices and sat down.

Harden: And they opened file cabinets?

Whaley: Opened file cabinets, took over, and the people had to leave essentially that were there then in command of the offices.

Now, down the hall, I don't think they went all the way down the halls, but they chanted and they had cheers and, of course, they got the television with them and they enjoyed great publicity.

Harden: But they didn't destroy property?

Folkenberg: No.

Whaley: In fact, they cleaned it up as they left. They actually made it as clean as it was--and some said cleaner--when they left. Now, they were there through Thursday.

Folkenberg: And what was your role? This must have been putting out a fire like crazy?

Whaley: Yes. Now this was real firefighting. We did, I guess, what you're supposed to do there, and the first thing that we did when we heard about it and knew it was happening was that we went to the Director immediately. Don and I went down to see Dr. Wyngaarden, just to let him know and to get his general feel of what was our attitude about this. And I recall always, his statement was, he borrowed from Goldwyn, Sam Goldwyn. He says, "Don't even ignore them." And this was sort of the principle we followed, as best we could. We decided not to do anything that would help generate publicity for them, and any steps we took, we tried to have them well defended in terms of what you would normally do.

For instance, after the first day, we wouldn't let any more photographers or press--T.V.--into the building at all. In other words, we just barricaded the building. And they were unhappy with us, but they set up their cameras outside the entrance.

Folkenberg: Now, they were staying overnight, I believe, PETA, right?

Whaley: They stayed overnight. Yes. And, of course, they made a frolic of it. They needed food, and so they would let down a rope from the windows up there and haul up their food. And this was great fun. It got a little bit nasty a time or two when they could call the Hill and call the Congressional offices and tell them that we were starving them to death in this building, and then we started getting calls from the Congress about this. And this was always--

Harden: Did you bring them food ever?

Whaley: No. We didn't. We decided that wasn't in our contract to do, and we didn't. We just left them alone. And some of our problems, from our point of view, were keeping our own people from getting too upset about this. Some of our own people were really dissatisfied about this. They didn't like the business of having to go through guards to get into Building 31, or not being able to get into their offices, or having the noise.

Now, I was in a committee meeting two floors below that, and this chanting and stuff was making it hard to hear in our meeting. And this was a real inconvenience, and why didn't we throw these people out, was the flak we were catching in our office. "Why don't you throw them out?"

Harden: This raises a real philosophical point that you had to deal with as Communications Director, because Dr. Goodwin in Mental Health wanted to take an activist stance, and several people did, and you still feel, from a Communications standpoint, that this is the better way to go?

Whaley: Yes. It was my view that we shouldn't do anything to promote them, and all they wanted was for us to carry them out, one-by-one, in front of the T.V. cameras that were sitting out in front of the building. And we were aware of that. And anything that we could do to make martyrs of them. And we wanted to bore everybody to death. That was our idea. And I must admit that we didn't have a good way to end it. We hadn't figured out how to get-- You know, if they were persistent. It was a question of which one of us had the most resolve.

But finally the Secretary, the woman, what was her name?

Harden: Oh, yes. Patricia Harris.

Whaley: No. It was a later one than that. She was Ambassador to--

Harden: Oh, Margaret--

Whaley: --to Ireland, from Massachusetts.

Harden: Yes. Heckler.

Whaley: Heckler. But they finally said they would leave if they could get a signed contract, or something, from the Secretary saying that she would do something. That would save face for all concerned. And that had to do with the monkeys.

Folkenberg: This was, I think, the University of Pennsylvania study they were protesting.

Whaley: Yes, that's right. So, she did, and they did. I mean, that ended it when she signed really a statement to the effect that she would do certain things about it. But then they, the following year then, demonstrated all summer out in front of NIH, out by the Metro stop. "Honk if you love animals." And so they had a wonderful time with that, and had a weekly procession, in an almost religious sense, to Wyngaarden's residence here on the campus, and they would recite the names of these monkeys as a litany and carry candles over to Wyngaarden's home. And, again, the big problem we had in the office was keeping cold compresses on Wyngaarden because he would get mad about this. And they day they got candle tallow all over his front steps just about did it. But then they had a hunger strike, and one fellow was going to starve himself to death. It was an interesting period.

Folkenberg: And basically your philosophy was to try and, on the one hand, keep a lid on hot tempered people here and just let it go it's course without trying to arrest them?

Whaley: That's right. But then, after a certain point, when they did--again, I guess a later year--concentrated on Building 1 and actually began to break in the front door, we felt that the time had come and that there had been enough of this and we certainly acquiesced when the police wanted to go ahead and arrest them. And I think it was true, and it was a different situation then. You see, when that first happened, really it was a new thing and agencies didn't do this to demonstrators.

Just the year before a group of disabled people had done exactly that in the Department when Califano was Secretary and had taken over the Secretary's Floor of that HHS Building and had stayed there overnight in a demonstration, and that was, in a sense, what we kept telling people here. "Look, we're not the only people that are suckers, if you want to call us that." But we felt it was the right thing to do.

Harden: Now another problem, and you had to deal with an awful lot of interesting problems in your career, was the idea of fraud in science that surfaced and got to be a very hot topic there for a while. We could go into various specific cases, but this got to be a real tension thing between NIH and Congressman Dingell having to deal with Stewart and Fader, who were self-described "fraud busters." Do you want to talk about all of this, what skills you used to negotiate this mine field?

Whaley: Yes. It was a mine field all right. And a lot of it, of course, was out of our reach. It was actually in the Congressional Liaison Office of the Director. And, of course, this was after Dr. Healy came, I guess, that some of it happened. At least her confrontation with Dingell was a big point in this. But it had been going on before.

Well, Stewart and Fader were interesting in that they always touched base with us before they did things, which got us implicated in them and, you know, in some ways it would have been easier if they'd have just gone ahead and done them. But we became almost parties to some of the things that happened by their "clearing it" with our office. And we did not want to oppress them. We wanted to be-- We were being extremely careful, leaning over backward, to avoid telling them no about anything. Their scientific independence, their freedom of expression, we were trying to preserve that. We were trying to be careful about it. And, at times, it was difficult. I think that's the main thing. We were involved in discussions. They had been asked to go on "60 Minutes," for instance, and so we sat in on the discussions with this and offered no objection, as far as we were concerned, to their doing it. And fortunately they decided not to at "60 Minutes."

Harden: I want to ask one more question before we move on down the line, and that is the NIH Centennial, you were right at the heart of all the planning. Is there anything that you can comment on?

Whaley: No. I wish I could claim as much-- I think it was an effort that involved more than our office. Dr. Wyngaarden was very anxious that it get its due, and I think it did. And in time, his appointment of Jay Moskowitz as sort of the leader, from his point of view, on it, on the administrative side, and for a number of the events that were related to that, and so a lot of the responsibility and "credit," or whatever, would go to that office.

We were involved in many supportive activities and much speechwriting. Heaven knows how many speeches we wrote about the Centennial. And we were active certainly in the media contacts with regard to it. But the celebration, per se, was--much of it--was handled by Jay Moskowitz.

Folkenberg: Dr. Wyngaarden resigned in July of '89 at Sullivan's request, and it wasn't until April of '91, which is nearly two years, that Healy was appointed. And *Science* implies that the abortion/fetal research litmus test was a major reason in the delay of getting a new candidate. Was that your feeling?

Whaley: That's what we-- It seemed to be true. We had no way of knowing directly but, from what we heard, and who was it, from Missouri--

Folkenberg: Danforth.

Whaley: Danforth, I think, cited that as one of the reasons.

Folkenberg: He says, "If you ask me that question, I'm not the appropriate candidate." Yes.

Whaley: But we just read the reports on this and it seemed to be true. But it was 18 months, or whatever. It was a long period.

Harden: And you've mentioned already that Bill Raub was the Acting.

Whaley: And, I thought, an excellent one. We worked very closely with him. The animal issues were very ripe at that point. We had lots of dealings with him. And he took a personal interest in trying to settle--and I think very fairly--on the animal side. I think PETA could never be critical of Raub. He was really helpful.

Harden: One of the things too, just to finish off Dr. Wyngaarden's tenure here, I recall when he left, he told one interviewer that he considered one of his achievements that he had, more or less, held the line and not let anything slip. I think he felt there had been a lot of pressure for NIH to lose ground, and he had not lost ground. And some people criticized him for saying it in that way. If you weren't expanding, you were contracting, more or less was the critique.

However, given the subsequent budget battles, and this and that, how did you see what he tried to do?

Whaley: Well, it seemed to me that he did that. He did keep things going forward and, I think, was a very strong hand in that. I thought he was a good Director from the point of view of the budget and keeping NIH from being, perhaps, leveled off.

Harden: Would someone else have done a stronger job, do you think, or, given the circumstances, is that a fair question?

Whaley: No. I just don't know, but I don't think so.

Folkenberg: Did Dr. Healy receive more publicity than former-Directors because she was the first female Director? Now, you'd been here at least 20 years by the time she was appointed.

Whaley: Yes, she did. She got a lot of notice for being the first female Director. A very media favorable person. Excellent appearance and speaks very well. Yes.

Folkenberg: What were some of her strengths, her quirks, her style, as opposed to--

Whaley: Well, she came in resolved to really do things. I think she came in really wound up to make a good job of this. And some of her early things. She went very strongly into the issue that had been talked about some, but not a lot, and that is the use of women subjects in research. This became one of her strong areas; that research was needed for women, as well as for men, and their health problems. I think she hit this with a bang.

And her strength, I think she made a great appearance in the media, and her first testimony in Congress, I think, really was sort of a knock-out. I think she did extremely well with the Committee on her confirmation hearing and, if you've read her speech, it was excellent.

Folkenberg: Now, did you write her speeches?

Whaley: A lot of them. Yes. After she came. Now, the early ones, no. I mean, for instance, her hearing, we didn't write that at all. But we certainly did get involved in writing many of her speeches.

Folkenberg: You retired soon after her appointment. Why? It was just time?

Whaley: Yes. It was time. And, let's see, I retired in '92, and she'd been here-- I've forgotten when she came.

Folkenberg: She came in April of '91.

Whaley: Yes. So it was almost a year that she'd been here. Yes. I think so. I think it-- I had felt that my time had come.

Harden: Now, could we kind of look at some cross-cutting things here? You served an awful lot of Directors as a communications person and, actually this is a question from Anne Thomas. She would like to know, did you consider yourself to be a true advisor to every Director, or more closer to the one who appointed you, or to certain Directors, or was there any difference in your sense of their wanting to know your opinion on communications issues?

Whaley: No. I don't think so. I felt a good relationship with each of the Directors and recognized that they had sometimes different objectives than I had, or different outlooks, I should say, than I had about things; that they were looking at a different picture than I was looking at.

Harden: And they didn't sense, they didn't convey any sense, to you that because you and others who were already here-- In other words, they hadn't had a chance to appoint their own staffs; that this was a--

Whaley: Well, that's an interesting question because I think maybe Dr. Healy may have felt a little uneasy about this, although this is only retrospect, that she felt she was inheriting what is, after all, a very personal operation, that is the Information Office and, from her point of view, it was personal. And it's strange that that didn't come up before; that Wyngaarden accepted us, for example, as we were. I know he commented about the whole of Building 1. He said, "You know, I'm having trouble getting used to all these people doing things for me."

Harden: It's interesting to think about where the Directors themselves came from. Dr. Healy came from the private sector, did she not?

Whaley: That's true. Uh-huh.

Harden: And Wyngaarden from a university.

Whaley: That's right.

Folkenberg: Fredrickson from here basically.

Harden: Fredrickson from here, and Stone from--

Whaley: From really a university setting.

Folkenberg: A university setting too.

Harden: And so did Marston. So, Dr. Healy was the only one who came directly from a private sector, from that kind of experience?

Whaley: Right. But I really felt acceptance within the limits.

Folkenberg: Were you going to ask about if he had a favorite Director?

Harden: Yes. Right. Go ahead and ask.

Folkenberg: Do you have someone that you--I mean-- I mean this takes nothing from the other Directors, but was there some Director that was maybe more of a soul-mate to you, or that you favored particularly?

Whaley: Well, that really is hard to answer, because I think of them differently, as having different qualities. I admired Fredrickson greatly for his vision, for his articulateness, for the way his mind worked. I never did feel quite as close to him, perhaps, as I might have to some of the others.

Stone, again, I liked because we started out, I saw him start out--and I was probably a party to it myself--to a very cold shoulder here and, as time went on, I realized that this guy was okay. And so I liked him and I have felt that relationship with him.

And Wyngaarden I became fond of and enjoyed working with him. And I found that we did an awful lot of speeches for him. Anne and I spent a lot of time writing his speeches. And he relied on us for this, and I guess that carries over, or something. But to sit down and discuss the speech subjects with him was always fun and so I enjoyed working with him in that sense.

So, it's different. Dr. Healy, I know, reached out to establish relationships with our staff people, perhaps more than the others, and you worry about this a little bit and, in fact, I told her this, that it was a little unusual in that sense.

But I have a hard time naming a favorite.

Harden: Now, I'm going to ask this question that you were going to ask because I want to embroider upon it.

At a retirement party we were at last week, Mark Stern was being his usual humorous self, and he said, "I'm going to give you my version of the Office of Communications history, and that is that 20 years ago the Congress was saying 'You've got to make NIH a household word; nobody knows about it,' and just recently they're saying, 'You've got to make NIH a household word; nobody has ever heard of it.'" That says that nothing changed.

On the other hand, what I'd like for you to do is to evaluate the biggest changes you did see and what worked and what didn't work.

Whaley: Wow, that's a big one and, in a sense, that demand is still there. People still-- I sat in an alumni meeting just last week and that very thing was said, that the NIH needs to be better known. But I was talking with someone the other day and they'd never heard of it.

But I had, after that, something that really warmed my heart. Charley Miller, who was the, I guess, Assistant Secretary for Management, or at least the Deputy to that, and Charley and I had had contact over the years but, as we were walking out he said, "You know, you guys did a good job. NIH is well known." And I said, "Charley, coming from you, you can't imagine how that makes me feel," because we heard it so often the other way, just as you've said.

Well, it's hard to evaluate what we have done. I think our effort really had been to work with the media, recognizing that we couldn't do anything ourselves; that we could get out here and shout at the top of our lungs and no one would pay any attention. If we made it easier for the media to work with us, if we made it so that they would think of us when they wanted to ask questions about technical problems that may not even involve us, we wanted to become a source of authoritative advice for them; to really make our relationship with them, at a time when we're not in a crisis situation, because that's always difficult here when there is a stand-off and every word you're saying is being weighed. And I think we have accomplished that, to a degree. I think there is a better relationship, and perhaps of more confidence, on the part of the media due to people like Anne where they can have confidence she knows what she's talking about. And that, I think, is the thing that we were hoping to do. And that's, after all, about all you can do, because they run the media.

Harden: Well, and also you were under the force of law, as I understand it, not to pat yourself on the back as a Government employee, so this keeps you from mounting a press campaign.

And I want to follow up that with one more. Anne was your choice as Director of Public Information. What qualities did you see in Anne that you chose her for?

Whaley: Well, number one, of course, my original choice was for her, in my office, as my deputy, and as Director of Public Information. Well, I told you about the institute that Irv and I were asked to look into, so you can identify what I'm talking about here. But a funny thing happened in that. In the interviews that we made, here was a young person that we interviewed that impressed both of us, and it was Ann. And that was before I had any idea that she would be working with us--but in that setting--and she didn't come to work with us then, but much, much later. But her long experience at NIH. She knows it very well. She shows herself as a real professional, particularly in dealing with professionals and, as time has gone on, I have seen her in action and know how well she works and how well she's respected, and I think those are the qualities. And she's a hard worker, a very hard worker.

Harden: This is true.

Folkenberg: I don't know if we've dealt with every memorable crisis. Is there any other crises that you would like to bring up that stand out in your memory that we didn't hit upon?

Whaley: (No response.)

Folkenberg: I was also going to say, you're going to be editing this interview, so you can add. So, if you think of anything, you can add something. So maybe this would just key you to think of something.

Whaley: Yes. I'm wondering, you know, will this ever be published, in pieces, or parts?

Harden: It may be up on the Internet and out to the whole world.

Whaley: Well--

Harden: That is probably the way it will be published.

Whaley: There are some funny little episodes. For instance, that one on the Freedom of Information and all the spaces of NIH, this was a prolonged story and a very interesting story, and it sort of illustrates how the Freedom of Information can be used by a skillful person. And a little frightening too.

Harden: Well, I think this serves a very valuable resource, especially if we make it widely available, because I think an awful lot of people have no idea how the Government works, and an awful lot of people have been very impressed and surprised that there are professionals working in the Government who think about these things. I mean, I have read this many places. You know? They're so surprised that the bureaucracy understands ethics, and this, and that, and the other, and just how much the bureaucracy does have to toe the line is not well understood.

Whaley: Of course, the restraints on us, a lot of people don't understand how many there were and, of course, the problems of publications, and we go through waves of different views about this as to what you can and cannot publish, and at times they're very, very tough.

I guess one of the crises that I haven't talked about was the reduction in force that took place in, what, about '73 or '74, somewhere in there. It was during a brief period that NIMH was with NIH. Now you remember they had been with NIH, then separated, then came back for about 6 months. It so happened that during that 6 months, and just by luck, was when Weinberger said, "You shall cut your public flak by 50 percent, cut the number of people in Public Information by 50 percent, and cut your expenditures for publications by 25 [%]," or some such thing. And this was laid on us as an order.

And it so happened that the Information people at NIMH were caught in this same order. And I had to run this dog-gone reduction. There were 50 people from NIMH, and we kept that as a cell, just separate, and so I remember the figures better for NIH as a whole. We had at that time 150-odd Public Affairs people in central and in institutes. We were able to get a redefinition of the job of Public Information, thank goodness, and the definition excluded people who were guides in the Library, or people who were writing scientific papers, entirely scientific papers, or who were involved in illustrations for scientific publications, and some other classes. So, we were able finally to get down to 52. So we got 100 people, essentially, out of that sample. Then we actually reduced that 52 by 26 and we surrendered 26 slots to the Department, which was really a tough, tough problem. But we finally did it.

What we had to do was take anybody who was designated as Public Affairs, we had only one per institute, and then we put all the rest of them as central and, of course, that wasn't too many when you think about it. And then we stopped calling them Information Officers. We had to change them to--I've forgotten what--some other name, and some of the odd names for Information Officers persist from that period. But we finally got through it, but that was one of the toughest. That was purely a bureaucratic, administrative--

Folkenberg: Well, actually that dovetailed right to my next two questions which are: What were the greatest satisfactions of the job, and what were the least satisfying parts of the job? And I'll venture a guess that that was one of the least satisfying parts of the job.

Whaley: Yes, in a way, and yet it turned out to be very satisfying too in that it made you feel like a bureaucrat of the worst kind in a way because you protected-- I'm sorry. Yes. Good thought. But I suppose, in a way, that was the most satisfying thing. That's a strange answer.

Folkenberg: Saving peoples' jobs in a sense?

Whaley: Yes. Uh-huh. As far as a personal matter. As far as accomplishment, I suppose, in a very diffused way, I believe the office is still respected and, if that's true, then I will feel good about that accomplishment because, in a way, it's a kind of an alien office in this setting, in a scientific community as this is.

Harden: What technologies brought about changes to Communications? You've talked some about the satellites. What did the computer do for you?

Whaley: By the time I left the computer was not much involved except as word processing and, of course, a great deal in that. One of the important things was the fax.

Folkenberg: Oh, I hadn't-- Yes.

Harden: Of course.

Whaley: Yes. That came in very much. There was a brief period we had what I thought was a wonderful service but it didn't keep going, and that was an outfit in Little Rock, believe it or not, was monitoring all network news broadcasts and copying the text and making it available the next day on a computer. And we, for a period of time, I guess for several months, were receiving that, the full text of all the network news from the evening before. And it was sent over the--not the Internet--but a leased wire, and we picked it up here and we were able to review that each morning in with the clips, which was an interesting thing.

Folkenberg: Well, you sort of answered the first one of my questions, which was the greatest contribution of the Office of Communications, which is that it's still respected, and what kind of advice would you have for anyone working as a communicator in the biomedical field? I mean, if you could give one or two pieces of advice that you think someone should hold as their golden rule, what would that be?

Whaley: Well, I think you must listen to the scientists. I think that's the main thing. Generally. It's a great compliment if you can get them asking you for help. And we've had that, and I feel good when that happens. But I think we really do have to listen to them. And then, of course, you've got to advise them and help them.

Harden: Which says then that science, again, operates in a political environment, at least science in Government, and communications can make or break it; I mean, no matter how pure, or whatever, the science is.

We're about through, Storm. I think everybody is tired this afternoon because this has been an extremely productive interview from my point of view anyway. Would you like to-- Is there anything we haven't covered, or would you like to tell us a bit about what you've been doing? Is there life after NIH?

Whaley: Well, there is life after NIH, and I've been having fun. The alumni group, it's fun to get with these old guys that were around, and it's kind of like an old staff meeting, and some of the same people that we used to meet with are a part of this, of the Board.

And then my personal activity in learning how to run a computer so I can get over being afraid of it, which takes a while. You're afraid you're going to blow it up, and then you get more respect, I think, for it.

And then that has tied in with the genealogy that is new, as far as I'm concerned. I was scornful of it when my parents could have helped me with it, and now I have no living relative that can help me at all. And it's so dumb for me to have done this. I have a few papers that my father had collected and have used them to some good advantage. But mostly I've just had to do that, and learn about it. But it's fascinating.

Harden: Are you still painting?

Whaley: Still painting.

Folkenberg: And you're reading books for the blind, right?

Whaley: Oh, yes. Uh-huh. That's a newer activity.

Harden: But, after all this time, you've decided to stay in the Washington area?

Whaley: Yes. I'm attracted to it somehow, and I enjoy it, not that I get out a great deal, except for things like the genealogy, of course. The resources are here. And so I was at the Archives last week. And I go out to the Mormon Temple about every couple of weeks. So those things are here.

Harden: Very good. Well, we thank you very much.

Whaley: Oh, sure.

Folkenberg: I'll turn this off.